

**BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON SOCIO-
ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The paper focuses attention on *Boko Haram* insurgency and its implication on socio-economic and educational developments. Historical antecedents on the development of *Boko Haram* insurgency was reviewed. The paper went further to explain the modus-operandi of the group that includes killing innocent people, bombing places of worship, raping and kidnapping to achieve their goals. The paper explain the concepts of insurgency, socio-economic development and educational development, then the implications of insurgency on socio-economic and educational development on the nation. The paper concluded that Boko Haram constitute a serious problem to the development of various sectors in Nigeria as a nation. It was recommended among others that all stakeholders should put hands on deck towards the realisation of high level of peace and security in our beloved country by strategizing different ways of fighting the menace of Boko Haram in Nigeria.

Keywords: Boko-Haram, Insurgency, Implication, Socio-economic and Education

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a multi-cultural state that have different sub-nations, with a population of about 170 million people cutting across the divides of ethnic and religious backgrounds. Comprising 36 states and 774 Local Government Areas, it is a complex, multi-religious and multi-ethnic nation state (Oyeniyi 2012). The complexity of Nigeria as a nation state is centred on its political formation, economic, social and religious inclinations. As a nation state, the country since independence has experienced several ethnic and religious crisis of various degrees and magnitude (Gilbert, 2013). For about two decades of democratic rule in Nigeria (the third Republic), it is lamentable that the security situation in the country is in critical pathetic condition. Life and property are not safe from the attacks of terrorists, kidnappers, armed gangs and militants. Electoral and communal violence also compound the security situation. The activities of the dreaded Islamic terrorist group known as *Boko Haram* have been a great concern to the Nigerian government, its people and the international community. *Boko Haram* insurgency led the loss of lives of more than 10,000 citizens despite the security measures put in place by the Federal Government of Nigeria to checkmate the heinous crime of the sect against humanity. Being that the government could not eradicate terrorism drive, it made youths in the North-East part of the country to form an anti-terrorism movement called “Civilian JTF” to complement the effort of security agents in countering the *Boko Haram* insurgents.

Aderenle (2012) lamented that the challenges posed by *Boko Haram* in Nigeria are not only about the viciousness of either its terror campaigns or the sect’s avowed mission to impose Islamic law on the country, but about the confusion regarding the immediate cause of the violence. A lot of factors have been attributed to the cause of Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. Some of the factors include socio-economic, political and religious. However, Liolio (2012) and

Onuoha (2014) posited that the high-rate of poverty in Nigeria has made the youths enlisted in the *Boko Haram* foot soldiers that assisted greatly in elongating their attacks since 2009. Most of the activities of the sect are concentrated in the North-East of Nigeria. Despite the state of emergency that was declared by the Federal government, the killings, bombings and kidnappings of *Boko Haram* continue unabated. The activities of Boko Haram sect have led to economic, social and psychological implications in the North-East Nigeria where the sect has a strong presence. The purpose of this paper is to unravel the implications of *Boko Haram* insurgency in Nigeria as it affects the socio-economic and educational development.

Historical Review of *Boko-haram* Insurgency

Eme and Ibietan (2012) analysed the doctrinal basis of the sect, they posited that *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad* meaning 'The Congregation of the People of Tradition for Proselytization and Jihad' better known as *Boko Haram* is an Islamic terrorist group that has a strong operational base in the north-east of Nigeria. It has its roots in north-eastern Nigeria, it has a networking system stemming from northern Cameroon, Chad and Niger Republic. *Boko Haram* is a Hausa compound word literally referring 'Western education is forbidden.' The ideology of the sect according to them is to bring to an end the secular system of government and introduce sharia law in Nigeria. However, Lister (2012) did not subscribe to the notion that the *Boko Haram*'s aim is to Islamize Nigeria through the introduction of sharia law. He opine that the foot soldiers of the sect are disgruntled youths who have been paid by unscrupulous Northern politicians to cause mayhem in the country because of their selfish ambitions.

The sect was founded in 2002 by the late Mohammed Yusuf who was captured and executed by Nigerian security forces in 2009. Until the government clamped down on the sect's

activities in 2009, the operations conducted by the sect were more or less peaceful. It is a militant Islamist movement based in the north-east Nigeria, who are pressing to forcefully establish an Islamic state against the Federal Republic of Nigeria. *Boko Haram* has received funds and training from Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb. Membership has consistently and continuously been increasing on daily basis in spite of the high rate of death recorded with the confrontation with Nigerian Army. Though, Nigerian army has equally lost some gallant soldiers who the Boko Haram has severally ambushed. On 22nd May 2014 Boko Haram was officially declared a terrorist group affiliated to Al-Qaeda by the United Nations Security Council. International sanctions including asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo were imposed against the *Boko Haram* group. Terrorism is a great obstacle in the development of our educational, social and economic prosperity.

Boko Haram has metamorphosed into terrorist activities with international connections and affiliations making it a relatively difficult nut for the Nigerian government to crack (Gilbert, 2014). Consequently, Nigeria has not known peace for about sixteen years now. The emergence of *Boko Haram*, has led to the flight for safety and security of most Nigerians residing in the North-east Nigeria. Since the commencement of the terrorist operations of the sect, they have adopted several methods to unleash terror on the people. And most states of Northern Nigeria have experienced their dastardly activities, but the worst hit have been Adamawa, Bauchi, Bornu, FCT (Abuja), Kaduna, Kano, Plateau and Yobe (Nwakaudu, 2012). Nigeria has witnessed harsh and severe confrontation and massive assault from terrorist groups which is obviously the most blood-thirsty and destructive, both in terms of demonic brutality, mindless savagery and flagrant disobedience to the principles of peace and stability. Nigeria has witnessed insurgency from this terrorist group called *Boko Haram* from 2009. They unleash terror and fear in the minds of every

Nigerians which witnessed unnecessary and merciless destruction of government properties, bombing of mosques, churches and other public places like markets, assassination of prominent individuals, burning of schools, and the occasional sporadic shooting of innocent citizens. After its founding by the late Mohammed Yusuf, Boko Haram's increasing radicalization led to a violent uprising which its leader was summarily executed. Its unexpected resurgence, following a mass prison break in September 2010, was accompanied by increasingly sophisticated attacks, initially against soft targets, and progressing in 2011 to include suicide bombings of police buildings and the United Nations office in Abuja. The government's establishment of a state of emergency at the beginning of 2012, extended in the following year to cover the entire northeast of Nigeria, led to an increase in both security force abuses and militant attacks. On 22 May 2014 Boko Haram was officially declared a terrorist group affiliated to Al-Qaeda and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb by the United Nations Security Council. International sanctions including asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo were imposed against the Islamist extremist group.

About 2.3 million People were said to be displaced by the conflict since May 2013 and about 250,000 have fled Nigeria for Niger, Cameroon and Chad. According to some sources, *Boko Haram* led to the death of more than 20,000 people since 2009, and an estimate of over 10,000 were killed in 2014 alone. The group has carried out mass abductions including the kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls from Chibok in April 2014.

Modus-operandi of *Boko-Haram*

Since the first attack of *Boko Haram* in 2009 in one of the police barracks in Bauchi state that killed scores of people, including police officers and members of their family, and the subsequent killing of the founder and mentor of the sect, Mohammed Yusuf, the coordinated attacks by Boko Haram have intensified. The extrajudicial killing of the Mohammed Yusuf

made the group intensified its attacks on government departments, mosques, church, markets, residential areas, police and military formations (Ajah, 2011). It is erroneous to believe that the sect attacks churches without doing same to the mosques. Boko Haram attacked mosques in the northeast and even killed some Islamic clerics that are opposed to their ideology. According to Human Rights Watch, Over 700 people have been killed in attacks on about 40 villages in the northeast states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. Most of the attacks are concentrated in these three states. However, the nation's capital Abuja, Plateau, Kano and some part of the north also experienced attacks from Boko Haram.

Rape and Kidnapping form parts of Boko Haram's modus operandi. The sect uses both methods as weapons of war. On April 15, 2014, Boko Haram attacked a government girls' school in Chibok, Borno state and kidnapped over 250 female students. The effort to secure the release of the girls has remained elusive despite the involvement of the international community in seeking the release of these girls. Boko Haram used kidnapped school girls as a human shield in order for the military not to attack their location in the Sambisa forest. The sect is on kidnapping rampage, they continue to kidnap and most of their victims are women.

Another strategy used by *Boko Haram* is that some of the women they kidnapped are sexually abused and in some scenarios, foot soldiers of Boko Haram forcefully marry some of them women to satisfy their sexual desire. Presenting a gloomy picture of the situation, Gilbert (2013) sees sexual violence and rape as an instrument of war in order to punish, intimidate, destabilize and to drive people away from their land. This is the case in the northeast of Nigeria where Boko Haram insurgency is concentrated.

The Concept of Insurgency

An insurgency is an armed rebellion against a constituted authority when those taking part in the rebellion are not recognized as belligerents. An insurgency can fought via counter-insurgency warfare, and may also be opposed by measures to protect the population, and by political or economic actions of various kinds aimed at determining the insurgents' claim against the incumbent regime. The nature of insurgencies is an ambiguous concept being that not all rebellion are insurgencies. There have been many cases of non-violent rebellions, using civil resistance.

The Concept of Socio-economic Development

Socio-economic Development is the process of social and economic development in a society, it is measured by indicators such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), life expectancy, literacy and level of employment. Changes in less tangible factors are also considered, such as personal dignity, freedom of association, personal safety, and freedom from fear of physical harm, and the extent of participation in civil society. Causes of socio-economic impacts are for example new technologies, changes in laws, changes in the physical environment and ecological changes.

The Concept of Educational Development

Implication of Insurgency on Socio-economic Development

The atrocities of the *Boko Haram* have some socioeconomic implications, especially in the northeast where Boko Haram is more pronounced. The economic, social and psychological

costs of the insurgency is unquantifiable. Commercial activities in the northeast was drastically reduced because of the unprecedented attacks by the sect. Banks, markets and shops do not open regularly due to the fear of the coordinated attacks from Boko Haram. According to Okereocha (2012) human capital and investors drain is hampering economic development in the northeast this is due to the attacks on banks, markets, parks and government departments. The attacks on these commercial areas have led to the migration of people to other parts of the country.

Shiklam (2012) posited that the Maiduguri Monday Market said to be the biggest market in the city is reported to have been seriously affected as hundreds of shop owners, are said to have closed their businesses and left the troubled city. About half of the 10,000 shops and stalls in the market were said to have been abandoned by traders who fled the city.

In the same vein, foreign nationals of Chad, Cameroun and Niger were repatriated to their home countries he assumption by the Nigerian government that some of them contribute to *Boko Haram* insurgency. Evidence has shown that not all the repatriated nationals of the above countries are members of Boko Haram. Definitely, those who had businesses in cities like Maiduguri, Damaturu and Yola will form part of those that were sent homes which had actually affect the economic activities in these cities. Ovaga (n.d) asserts that under this situation, the economy of the northeast will seriously be affected if foreign citizens who contribute large quota to the development of the northeast vis-à-vis their economic activities are sent back to their countries of origin. The never-ending attacks by Boko Haram in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states had a severe impact on the economic lives of people living in these areas.

Another case in point is that the working duration of most commercial banks in the affected areas hit by *Boko Haram* bombings was reduced from eight hours to three hours (Mohammed, 2012). In Maiduguri, Borno state, where the sect originated, the frequent bombings

and clashes between *Boko Haram* and the security agents had a serious adverse effect on the commercial and businesses activities in the area for many businesses have reportedly dwindled and crumbled while many people have fled the state (Shiklam, 2012).

The poverty profile released by the National Bureau of Statistics illustrates that there is the prevalence of poverty in the north as compared to the south. Northern Nigeria in particular has the highest figure of relative poverty in comparison with south-west and south-east zones that have relative poverty of 67.0% and 59.1% respectively. The northeast and north-west zones have the highest figure of 76.3% and 77.7% relative poverty respectively (NBS, 2012). It is in this data that the *Businessday* newspaper predicted that if the insecurity situation continues, development in the northern part of Nigeria will remain at a stagnant point and the gap between the north and south will broaden further (BDN, 2012). Similarly, Obaremi (2014) contends that economic affairs in the north is already depleting due to a massive departure of people and financial institutions from the northern region. But if the government delayed the implementation of comprehensive plans to tackle insecurity from its roots, then not only will the northern region be economic desolation, the country as a whole risk losing billions of dollars in foreign direct investment. The business activities of telecom operators have not been left out from the attacks of Boko Haram. For instance, some telecom masts belong to some major mobile telephone operators were destroyed by Boko Haram and the banning of telephone services by the military affected the income generation of some of the mobile phone operators.

Just as the economic implications of *Boko Haram* atrocities are innumerable, the same thing applies to the social life. The church, school, market, clinic and mosque are potential targets of Boko Haram. For example, in April 2014, a Federal Girls' College was attacked which subsequently led to the abduction of over 250 female students. Attacks on these social places

have prevented people from going to these places. Some students have stopped going to school, others have been transferred to the southern part of the country to continue their education. Both Muslims and Christians were afraid to go to their places of worship due to the fear of being attacked by the insurgents.

The National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) that was created by the government after the end of Nigerian civil war to foster unity among Nigerians was under threat due to *Boko Haram* attacks. The NYSC directorate posted 4171 corps members to Adamawa state, 1041 of the corps members have to abandon their national duty due to the precarious security situation (Ovaga (n.d.)). Some parents from the south of the country protested vehemently against the posting of their children to the northeast.

Implication of Insurgency on Educational Development

Boko haram insurgency left indelible marks by thwarting the development of education in Nigeria and the northeast in particular. It is on sad note that most secondary schools in Borno state where over 200 girls were kidnapped were close for so many months. Statistics revealed that over 14 schools have been burnt down in Maiduguri the state capital of Borno state, over 7,000 children were forced out of schools.

The insurgents gave a fatal blow on the enrolment of pupils and students in the Northern Nigeria. Parents and pupils live in perpetual fear of attacks and this might have direct effect on school attendance (European Centre for Research and Development, 2013). How then do we expect to have a healthy teaching-learning condition in the affected communities? It has been recorded that from 2014 to date, the insecurity generated by the constant attacks by the *Boko Haram* in Madagali LGA and other Local Government Areas in Adamawa state led many parents

to send their children away or leave the state, thus disrupting their academic pursuit. According to documents provided by Director of Basic and Secondary Education in the Federal Ministry of Education, in 2013, schools in the north-east recorded the lowest number in recent years regarding pupils who applied and secured admission into junior secondary schools in the country. In one school in Mungono, out of 160 eligible pupils, only 60 applied for admission into junior secondary school in 2013. An official in the Ministry of Education in Borno state reportedly stated that over 15,000 children in Borno state stopped attending classes following the high rate of insecurity in the state, including the attacks on schools.

A teacher from one village in northern Borno state, hiding in Maiduguri in fear for his safety, told Amnesty International that there is no opportunity for children in the village to continue their education after the schools were forced to close. He, said, “None of the children go to school now. Those who were taking exams had to hide their school uniforms in a plastic bag before they leave home. Boko Haram even tore the uniforms of students who travel to Maiduguri to attend school from the village. They warned all the students to stop attending schools, except Islamic schools”. A 25-year old teacher from old Bama primary school, lamenting over the attacks on schools explained that it may lead teachers relinquishing their jobs or flee the area (Brendan, 2010). It was reported by Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2011 (EFAGMR) that attacks on higher education and teacher training institutions may restrict research, teaching content and pedagogical training and cause drop out, distraction, demoralization and traumatising of tertiary students and academics. This can in turn lead to restrictions on curriculum content and coverage, knowledge and teacher quality. Persistent attacks on schools and teachers can also deter students pursue a course in teacher-training. Similarly, attacks where teachers are killed in broad daylight, in some cases in full view of

pupils, were likely to expose the children and other teachers to shock, distress and severe psychological trauma. The destruction and damage to school infrastructure and facilities grossly reduced the availability of access to education of many children. It is not only the classrooms that were lost but also all the teaching materials, equipments and school records leaving children with nowhere to learn. Access to basic education requires that sufficient and proper facilities and services are in place and that students can have access to adequate books and materials. In some places schools that have not been attacked have equally been closed, teaching has been suspended and teachers forced to abandon their classrooms. When institutions of learning are targeted or attacked, the incalculable amount of damage and its consequences can be grave and far-reaching. This is because after the attacks, many schools remain closed and unrepaired for long periods. *Boko Haram* insurgency has a serious adverse effect on the management of education. This is because repairs to damage from attacks and normal maintenance and investment in education may be put on hold because labourers dare not risk their lives for repairing or reconstructing a school that has already been targeted out of fear of reprisals. Equally government may not risk investing in the development of schools for fear of the money being wasted if attacks are repeated. As at June 2014, statistics from Yobe State Ministry of Education indicated that over 209 schools were destroyed by the insurgency. The Governor, Ibrahim Gaidam lamented, "I am sad that the resources we would have used to provide other infrastructure are now being channelled to the reconstruction of the schools." The reconstruction of the schools has cost so much to the government. The State Universal Basic Education Board of Borno state had to issue directives to all their staff assigned to those areas to stop going to school for a period of 6 months until things calm down. The reactions to Boko Haram attacks were not restricted to students in schools that have actually been attacked, because an attack on

one school leads to fear that any school in the area might be attacked. Boko Haram's repeated attacks on schools in the northeast of Nigeria have insurmountable obstacles to learning for large number of pupils. The psychosocial impact will affect children's ability to learn, and where the threat of attacks persists may lead to parents keeping their children at home away from school, even if the school remains open. Such obstacles to access to education can result in severe developmental problems for the children and the nation at large. Children run the risk of never being able to return to school or completing their education, thus diminishing the potential contribution they can make to society (Brenda, 2010).

Teachers may also experience psychological effects that are overcome by grief at the loss or maiming of their colleagues and students or are distracted by threats to colleagues, making it difficult for them to support their students or perform their job to the best. If they are visibly anxious, this may heighten the fears of their own students. Fear may cause teachers to stay away from school for long periods, forcing their closure or preventing their resumption after attacks.

Conclusion

To be candid, the activities of *Boko Haram* constitute a serious threat to the development of Nigeria. Aside the socioeconomic and educational implications, the human cost is of great concern to everybody in Nigeria. Thousands of people have been displaced due to the persisted attacks from the dreaded Islamic sect called *Boko Haram*. The government should take a giant step towards the right direction to put an end to the insurgency of *Boko Haram*. The nation cannot continue to lose its citizens on a daily basis from Boko Haram coordinated bombings and sporadic shootings.

Recommendations

- The Nigerian government needs to initiate policy that will generate employment for the army of unemployed youths in the country.
- Boko Haram has sponsors, the government should go after those financing the operations of the sect.
- The government should open a dialogue channel in order to know the grievances of the sect.
- Reports from the battlefield indicate that security personnel are not being provided with modern fighting equipment. The government should endeavour to supply the army with sophisticated military equipment.
- it is recommended that insurgent matters should not be taken for granted by the community, the security agents and the government since allowing it to mature will bring about devastating effect to the communities and the nation in general. 1. It is also recommended that the schools being destroyed by the Boko Haram should be rebuilt and children should be encourage to go back to schools. Scholarships should be provided to students in Madagali so as to motivate and encourage them.
- measures should be taken to curb the problem of Boko Haram particularly by improving the lives of the rural communities in the form of providing basic social amenities such as health care facilities, educational facilities, electricity, water supply and good roads.
- Agricultural activities should be highly improved and encouraged to drastically reduce the problem of unemployment by giving the rural community's soft loans, providing modern agricultural machineries, and providing ready market for their produce.

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